




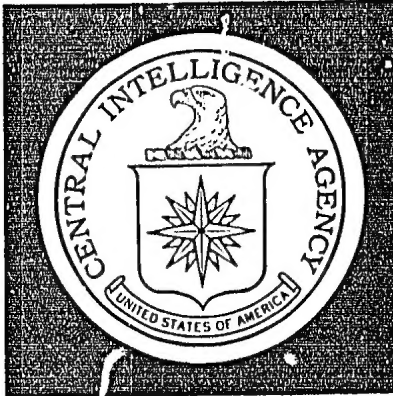
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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

The Angolan Insurgency: Ten Years Later

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For more than a decade, Portugal has been fighting insurgency in its African province of Angola. Although Portuguese forces have succeeded in restricting the insurgents to sparsely populated and economically unimportant areas of Angola, it is apparent that Lisbon cannot win a conventional military victory unless it deprives the guerrillas of the external support provided by black African states, especially the neighboring countries of Zambia and Congo (Kinshasa). This Portugal is not likely to manage. A substantial military effort against these states probably will not be mounted because there are alternative economic and political pressures that can be effectively applied.

Furthermore, Lisbon's limited resources are spread thin by three African insurgencies. Nevertheless, Lisbon is firmly committed to maintaining its presence in Angola and is resigned to a long-term struggle. Its economic stake there is growing, and provincial government income is paying for an increasing amount of the defense burden. For the time being, Portugal believes that its best bet is to keep the insurgency confined to remote areas of the province. For their part, the insurgents show no signs of throwing in the towel, but they have probably reached the limits of their present capabilities.

Hence, the present stalemate seems likely to continue indefinitely.



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*Popular Movement for the
Liberation of Angola*

The largest and most effective of the three nationalist groups opposing the Portuguese is Agostinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), formed in 1956 by a merger of several small nationalist groups. A key to the organization's effectiveness over the years has been the ability and high motivation of its urban-educated leaders who are Marxist oriented. They have sought, with some success, support from all segments of the Angolan population—including whites—by stressing that the movement is national and multiracial rather than tribally oriented. The leadership itself has included mulattoes [redacted] although nearly all the rank and file have been black Africans.

Neto, a Portuguese-educated physician and poet, became President in 1962. Since then, the leadership has undergone many changes brought about by dissension and various reshuffles in the hierarchy. Neto has managed to ride out these changes, and he has fashioned a centralized party, which he has strengthened by selecting leaders mainly on the basis of proven ability. Neto has even won the grudging respect of many Portuguese officials because of his organizational abilities.

In its early years, the movement operated solely from bases in Congo (Brazzaville) against the Cabinda exclave and in northwestern Angola. The effort in Cabinda was limited, however, because it lacked manpower and because it was unable to obtain sufficient support from the local inhabitants who remained indifferent to non-Cabindan insurgents. The organization has maintained some men and training camps in Congo (Brazzaville), but insurgent actions against Cabinda now are very rare and are confined to border areas. Neto's men also encountered major obstacles in northwestern Angola. Here, the guerrillas not only met with Portuguese military pressures but also harassment by a rival insurgent group through whose territory they had to travel.

Although a heavily armed force infiltrated the northwest several years ago, the movement thus far has been unable to resupply these units.

Because the effort to penetrate the northwest and to seize Cabinda became too costly, Neto shifted his attention to eastern Angola in 1966. Two years later, the main base of operations was moved to Zambesia, where permission had been granted for sanctuary and for the transit of arms and men. From initial operations in the Cazombo salient of Moxico District, the organization was able to expand throughout that district and into nearby areas of three adjoining districts: Lunda to the north; Cuando Cubango to the south; and Bié to the west.



Agostinho Neto
MPLA president

The movement's early progress in eastern Angola resulted primarily from the absence of Portuguese forces in the area and the slow Portuguese reaction to the infiltration. Since 1968, however, the Portuguese have slowed the advance with a series of offensives and almost daily ground patrols. Serious logistical problems have further frustrated guerrilla expansion. In order to reach Angola's populous central plateau and coastal districts, the insurgents must cross hundreds of miles of Portuguese-held terrain. Although Neto's guerrillas can now operate as far as the eastern fringe of Bié District adjacent to the populated plateau area, they probably use up most of their supplies in reaching this point.

Neto's guerrilla operations are now limited mostly to sporadic ambushes, hit-and-run raids against Portuguese outposts, mining roads, and terrorist attacks against Portuguese-controlled resettlement villages. As a condition for

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maintaining sanctuary privileges in Zambia, the movement is not allowed to attack the Benguela railroad, the only strategic target in eastern Angola. The railroad is a tempting target for mobile guerrilla bands, but at the same time is a vital economic lifeline for landlocked Zambia.

Neto's group is the best armed and trained of Angola's insurgent groups. Its arsenal includes Kalashnikov AK-47 assault rifles, light and heavy machine guns, mortars, bazookas, and rocket launchers. External support has come from a wide variety of sources and in many forms. The organization has received the bulk of its arms and financial support from the Soviet Union. Available estimates of Soviet financial aid range from \$144,000 to \$300,000 per year. Hundreds of its trainees have gone to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, either for military instruction or to attend trade schools. Assistance from Communist China has been considerably less and has been limited mainly to arms supplied through the Organization of African Unity. Cuba has also trained some recruits both in Cuba and at training camps in Congo (Brazzaville). Since 1965, the African Liberation Committee of the OAU has given support to Neto's guerrillas; in 1969-70 the movement received more than \$49,000 in materiel and financial aid through the committee. It has also received either assistance or training directly from a number of militant African states, including Algeria, Guinea, Congo (Brazzaville), and Tanzania.

The Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile

Formerly the foremost Angolan insurgent group, the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE) led by Holden Roberto has slipped to a poor second. The organization's roots date back to 1958 with the formation of the Union of Angolan Peoples (UPA), an early nationalist movement. Within two years, Roberto consolidated his control of the union and in 1962 it merged with another minor group to form the present organization. Roberto, moderate and

pro-Western in outlook, has continued to dominate the organization.

From inception, its primary base of support has been the large Angolan refugee population of Bakongo tribesmen who live in southwestern Congo (Kinshasa). Although the organization has won some support among the agrarian Bakongo across the border in northwestern Angola, it has failed to broaden its base because of its thinly disguised regional and tribal make-up. Moreover, Roberto's highly personal leadership and his unwillingness to compromise have produced chronic friction at the leadership level that resulted in the defection of several prominent members.

When the rebellion began in 1961, the UPA had a rudimentary organization of political activists already at work in northwestern Angola. The suddenness and ferocity with which the insurgency broke out caught the organization by surprise, however, and it was only able to provide limited leadership to the insurgents. Several hundred Europeans were massacred, and several thousand fled the northern districts to Luanda and other major towns. But by the end of the year, Portuguese military forces had regained control of all important towns, villages, and roads.

Since 1965, Portuguese counterinsurgency forces have been able to restrict Roberto's units to inaccessible mountain strongholds in the northwest and to small cross-border forays along the north-central Angolan border. In early 1970, the organization tried to regain momentum, launching its most ambitious offensive in several years. Portuguese forces soon countered the guerrillas in the north, although other units in eastern Angola carried out a few successful attacks.

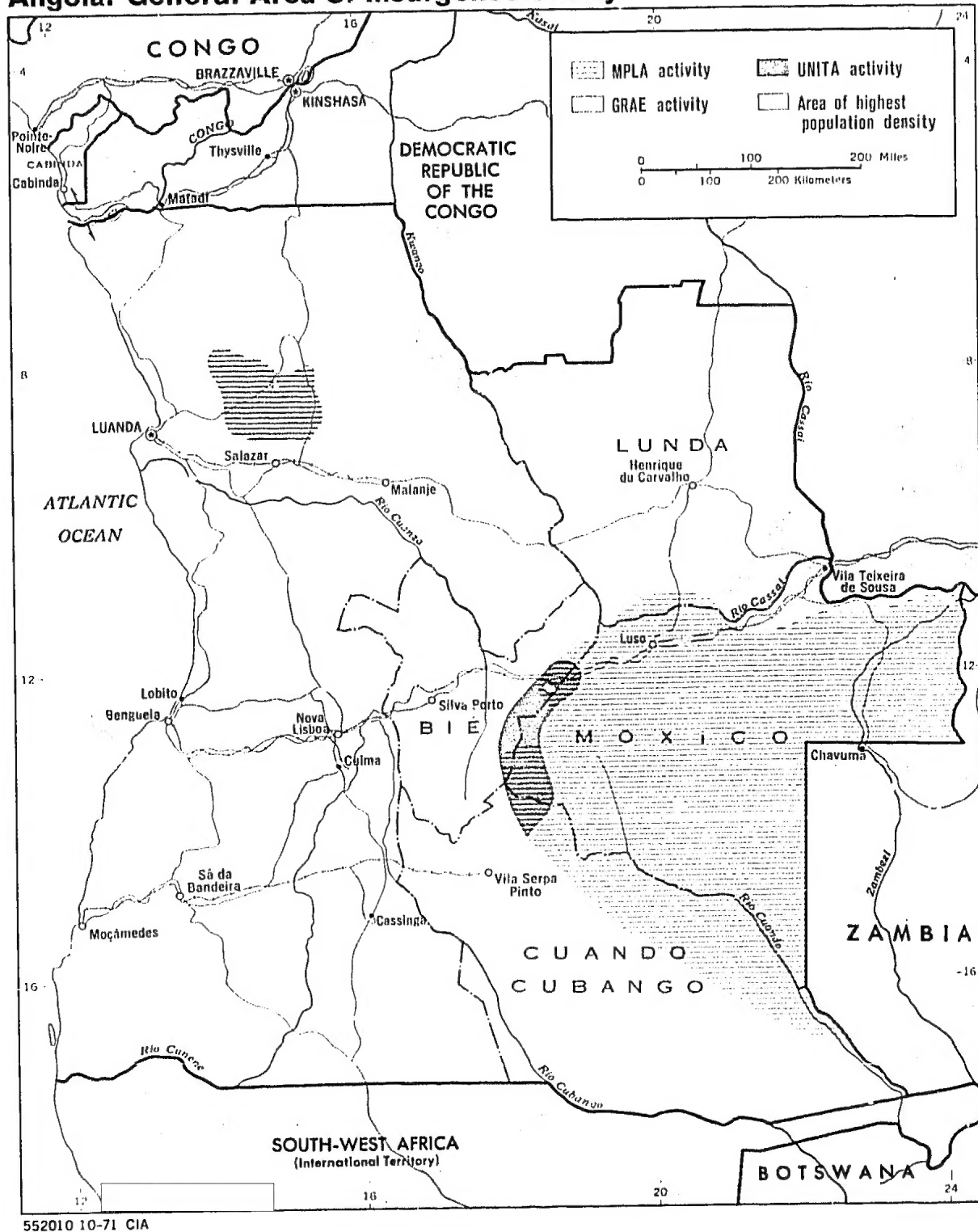


Holden Roberto
GRAE leader

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Angola: General Area of Insurgent Activity

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Roberto's group has made little headway along its second front in the east. In late 1966, some insurgents began entering the southern end of Lunda District north of the Benguela railroad, largely to demonstrate that it was more than a limited tribal-based movement. It has continued sporadic operations in the east, but the main effort remains in the northwest.

One factor in the organization's decline was Roberto's loss of the political support he once received from the OAU. Initially, recognition by the OAU as the Angolan government-in-exile gave

by restrictions placed on their activities by the Congo (Kinshasa) Government. Out of favor with most of the African and Communist states that provide the bulk of assistance to the insurgent movements, the organization has usually fielded poorly trained and inadequately armed guerrillas. President Mobutu has been Roberto's major benefactor, providing financial and materiel aid, occasional training, and bases in Congolese territory. Since early 1969, however, Mobutu has followed a policy of restraining insurgent operational activity, while quietly renewing working relations with Portuguese authorities in Angola. Late last

STRENGTH ESTIMATES (1971)

PORTUGAL		MPLA		GRAE		UNITA	
Total: 59,000 ^{1/}		Total: 7,000		Total: 5,000		Total: 1,000	
Army ^{2/}	59,000	Field Strength:		Field Strength:		Field Strength:	
Navy	2,700	North	500	North	2,500	East	200
Air Force	3,500	East	3,500	East	500		
Regular Police	12,000						
Security Police	1,100						

^{1/} Does not include local militia

^{2/} Approximately 30 percent recruited locally

the organization a distinct advantage in obtaining African-wide support. More recently, the preference of the militant African states for Neto's group and growing doubts about the military effectiveness of Roberto's men have resulted in a diversion of OAU assistance. At the 1971 OAU summit conference, the African heads of state withdrew recognition of Roberto's organization as a government, thereby reducing it to the same status as all other African liberation movements.

Roberto's guerrillas continue to be handicapped by a shortage of modern small arms and

year, he abruptly cut in half the group's monthly subsidy of \$20,000, despite protests from Roberto. Lacking an alternative to Kinshasa's limited support, Roberto has had to make do with what little he receives.

*National Union for the Total
Independence of Angola*

The smallest and weakest of the three groups is the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) led by Jonas Savimbi. Savimbi broke with Holden Roberto in 1964 and

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formed his own group two years later. Because of tribal ties and Savimbi's personal contacts along the Benguela railroad, the organization was initially successful in winning cooperation from eastern and central Angolan tribes who were cool to the other two insurgent groups.

Savimbi and his followers have managed to survive under conditions that should have finished them long ago. Since 1967, this group has experienced a sharp decline because of clashes with Neto's men and defections to Roberto. It was expelled from Zambia after attacks against the Benguela railroad and has received no meaningful outside support. Yet, Savimbi has kept his small group alive, operating with virtually no assets. Moreover, he has set up operational headquarters inside Angola, a feat no other Angolan liberation leader has been able to manage.

Although not a serious military threat, the organization retains some capability for mounting limited operations in east-central Angola. Savimbi is also free to sabotage the Benguela railroad now that he is no longer beholden to the Zambians. As recently as July 1971, the Portuguese claimed his

group was responsible for a sabotage incident on the railroad.

Portugal Fights Back

Determined to remain in Angola, Lisbon has reacted vigorously to the insurgent challenge. Portuguese regular armed forces have increased from about 11,000 when the rebellion began to over 65,000 in early 1971. The army forms the backbone of the counterinsurgency forces and is augmented by some militia and paramilitary organizations. The Provincial Volunteer Civil Defense Organization is the largest militia group, numbering around 35,000, of whom some 6,000 are armed. It provides armed protection for villages and towns, and performs other routine civil defense functions that free conventional forces for military operations. In addition, there are approximately 4,000 irregular black troops that operate under army or security police aegis.

In northern Angola where the largest number of combat battalions are located, the Portuguese seem to have the insurgency well in hand. Large-scale sweep-and-destroy operations have gradually pushed the insurgents back into inaccessible mountain redoubts in the northwest. Along the north-central Angolan border, insurgent harassment has usually been restricted to shallow penetrations that are soon pushed back across the border into Congo (Kinshasa).

In eastern Angola, the character of the war is markedly different. Both Portuguese troops and insurgents move with relative freedom through the vast and open terrain. As a result, government forces place heavy emphasis on almost daily patrols aimed at disrupting guerrilla infiltration and supply routes. To increase mobility, a small Portuguese helicopter fleet assists ground forces in carrying out quick long-range strikes and sweep operations that require placement of troops in blocking positions. Although this military strategy has not eliminated the insurgent threat, Portuguese military authorities claim, with some validity, that they have kept the guerrillas on the



Portuguese Airlift Troops to Combat Zone

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move in eastern Angola and out of the more important central plateau area.

In conjunction with the military drive, the Portuguese are also waging a determined psychological action program designed to demoralize the insurgents and cut them off from the population. The major focus of this effort is the establishment of village clusters where the population of an insurgent area can be resettled. Most of these villages, called "aldeamentos," are provided with their own defense militia and are situated near roads to permit rapid assistance by Portuguese forces if attacked. The number of aldeamentos is not known, but they are believed to have denied insurgents easy access to much of the population of eastern Angola.

The Portuguese have taken other nonmilitary measures to strengthen their hand. In order to foster allegiance to Portugal, an extensive program of development and social reform has been introduced, including the construction of schools and clinics in remote areas. According to the Portuguese, since 1961 the number of children in primary school has grown from 105,000 to around 520,000. A few pilot projects have been started in Bié and Moxico districts to improve the quality and yield of agricultural commodities grown by native producers. Military units also help build medical and educational facilities for the local population. All of these programs have been partially successful. All suffer from a general lack of resources.

The Angolan economy is growing, partly in spite of the war, partly because of it. Economic activity has expanded to the point where provincial government income is relieving the metropole of an increasing share of the burden of defense expenditures. While combating insurgency contributes to inflationary pressures and takes an increasing share of the Angolan provincial budget, important sectors of the economy have continued to grow. Agriculture, manufacturing, and minerals extraction—especially the rich offshore oil wells at Cabinda—have increased output in the last few



MPLA Guerrilla With Communist Literature

years. Basic projects, principally roads but also water supply and electrification, are being speeded up because of the war and will have a long-term impact.

Regional Implications

The insurgents' use of Zambia and Congo (Kinshasa) for sanctuary, supply, and staging is a key factor affecting Portuguese relations with these two neighboring countries. Lisbon has been unable to end their support of the guerrillas, but it has been able to induce both states, through various political and economic pressures, to place some restraints on the insurgents.

Portuguese relations with Zambia are more difficult than with the Congo, in part because of President Kaunda's strong personal commitment to the liberation of white-ruled southern Africa. Because of Zambia's geographic vulnerability to economic retaliation, however, Kaunda tries to keep a restraining hand on the insurgents in his country. Kaunda has been forced to prohibit guerrilla attacks against the Portuguese rail system because Lusaka is dependent on both Angola and Mozambique for rail and port facilities. This dependence has often strained relations between the two countries, and since 1966 there have been sporadic and occasionally serious incidents along the Angolan-Zambian border. Attempts to reach

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agreement on border integrity have been hampered by mutual suspicions and recriminations. Relations have been complicated by occasional Portuguese incursions into Zambian territory, either in pursuit of insurgents or in reprisal for guerrilla raids. On several occasions, the Portuguese have temporarily closed their railroads in retaliation for guerrilla strikes from Zambia.

Beset by the black African states, the Portuguese have had to look south for moral and political support. While they have carefully tried to avoid identification with the racial policies of white-ruled South Africa and Rhodesia, which conflict with their own professed multiracial attitudes, the Portuguese have found one common bond with white-ruled southern Africa. The three countries view themselves as forming the last bastion against Communist subversion. South Africa also has a special interest in keeping Angola under Lisbon's control as a buffer zone against any insurgent infiltration into neighboring South-West Africa.

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Assistance from South Africa and Rhodesia has been limited thus far.

Although Congo (Kinshasa) has provided sanctuary for Roberto's headquarters and operational bases, actual logistical support has been limited due to President Mobutu's conflicting motives. Because Mobutu values his reputation as a sponsor of Angolan nationalism, he publicly welcomes Roberto's group. He genuinely wants the organization to maintain some effectiveness, because he relies on it to check subversive influences by the Marxist-oriented followers of Neto—a potential channel for Communist subversion among Angolan refugees in the Congo. On the other hand, Mobutu is anxious to avoid Portuguese reprisals for guerrilla strikes mounted from Congolese territory. He particularly fears that heightened operations by Roberto would provoke the Portuguese authorities to delay or halt copper shipments on the rail line from Katanga to Benguela. He has placed strict limitations on the group's operations,

Neither South Africa nor Rhodesia is likely to become more involved in helping the Portuguese as long as Lisbon appears able to hold its own. Moreover, the Portuguese would rather go it alone so long as the insurgents do not represent a serious challenge.

The Future: More of the Same

The insurgency shows every indication of remaining at a stalemate for a long time to come. Neither the Portuguese nor the insurgents appears capable in the foreseeable future of gaining a decisive military advantage over the other. The Portuguese are unlikely to initiate an all-out drive to deprive the insurgents of their external support and foreign sanctuaries. Portugal's human and economic resources are limited and are already spread thin by insurgencies in its other territories of Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. Moreover, Lisbon sees no real need to press for total victory so long as the insurgents can be contained in the north and confined to the remote and economically unimportant regions of eastern Angola.

As part of his policy of quiet collaboration with the Portuguese, Mobutu has allowed Portuguese diplomats to return to Kinshasa.

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Portugal can be expected to contain, but not eliminate, any foreseeable military threat from the guerrillas. It can probably continue to sustain the tolerably low casualty rate in Angola (according to available estimates, fewer than ten soldiers a month in 1971). Moreover, the growing Angolan economy is now beginning to relieve the metropole of an increasing share of the war's financial burden.

For their part, the insurgents' strategy is to avoid serious confrontations and simply hang on. Despite their inability to mount concerted actions or to unite in a common front, the liberation movements show no signs of giving up the struggle. Rather, the insurgents hope to keep the pressure on until Portugal, through economic necessity, international pressure, or "historical inevitability," is forced to give up its African provinces. [REDACTED]

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